Dallas Primary School Validation Report

Validation Report	
School Name: Dallas Primary School	**Name of Validator:** Joanna Maclean
Dallas Primary Dallas Moray iv36 2SA United Kingdom	**Date of Validation:** 25/11/2020
Head Teacher / Principal Name: Mairi Grant	**Digital Technology Co-ordinator:** Mairi Grant
School SEED Number: 5200628	

This report includes validator's comments based on a review of the online submission and the validation visit.

We are happy to become a mentor school: Yes

- We are happy to share this report with Education Scotland: Yes
- Would you be willing to be contacted by the programme with the view of contributing an article/blog or other materials to help other schools on their digital journey?: Yes
- We are happy for Education Scotland to contact us to highlight our practice: Yes
- We are happy to share this report with the local authority: Yes

Leadership and Vision *100%*

Dallas Primary is a small school, with thirty-four learners and two full-time class teachers and it was clear from speaking with the headteacher that they have a real community of practice that help shape and move their digital vision forward. Staff have embraced the use of technology as a tool for learning and are working together to upskill themselves and deliver rich learning experiences for their pupils. The commitment to the creative and safe use of technology throughout the school was very much in evidence. Their drive and vision are translated into a range of opportunities for exploring how technology can enhance learning throughout the school and develop its profile.

#	Descriptor	Validator's comment
1	The distinctive contribution of digital learning and teaching is integrated into the whole school vision and the School Development Plan.	Moved from 'integrated' to 'fully integrated'. The use of digital tools for learning and teaching if fully integrated into the whole school vision and development plan at Dalas Primary. Their focus is driven by skills development and the use of effective pedagogy. Digital technologies is fully integrated throughout the school and continual self-evaluation ensures that staff are kept up-to-date on the latest technological developments and how these can be used effectively to enhance learning and teaching across the curriculum.
2	The digital learning and teaching strategy is approved by the local authority and is informed by wider research of the regional/national guidance, advice and information.	Dallas Primary's digital strategy is informed by both national and local authority policy and guidelines. The School's Headteacher, Mrs Mairi Grant has attended authority-wide digital forums and has regularly visited local cluster schools to share good practice and to ensure continuity, equity and attainment targets linked to A Digital Learning and Teaching Strategy for Scotland (2016).
3	The digital learning and teaching leader/coordinator has a proactive, operational and evaluative role in supporting learners' digital capability both in school and in their blended learning activities. They also support teachers' pedagogical deployment of digital technology.	Mrs Mairi Grant, the headteacher, is proactive in their leadership of and support for digital technologies within the school. Mrs Grant recognises the educational value of digital technologies and is keen to exploit these effectively, using them as a tool to support and enhance learning. With the support of the staff, she has developed the sharing good practice, at cluster and local authority level e.g. she recently led a training session on offer to all primary and secondary staff with Moray on digital tools. Within the School itself, she has been proactive in developing a needs-based training programme to ensure that support and encouragement in the use of digital technologies is readily available.
4	The school frequently and collaboratively reviews its digital learning and teaching strategy by evaluating the potential of emerging technologies and blended learning strategies and best practice scenarios.	The Digital Strategy document is reviewed regularly and systematically, with amendments made as required. Staff were very aware that these were working documents. The school have invested in several emerging technologies and identified best practice scenarios for effective implementation.

5	The strategy supports digital learning and teaching CLPL in a range of face-to-face and blended learning contexts including whole-school teaching, peer-to-peer learning, the use of external organisations/personnel and formal training.	CLPL is in place to support the school priorities in teaching and learning through technology and offers formal e.g. Learntech team, Barefoot, and informal training as required. As this is a small school, teachers readily share ideas and training sessions with each other, there is a real community of practice cascading training, effective pedagogy and impact on learning.
6	Outlines the rationale for the use of digital technologies and recognises the distinctive contribution of digital learning and teaching in school and online.	The School Policy provides a clear rationale for the implementation of technology across the curriculum to enhance learning and teaching. Dallas Primary are seven years into their 1:1 iPad deployment and it is clear that they have been on their digital journey for a number of years now and that the use of technology is firmly embedded.
7	Includes links to both external and school-generated curriculum links.	The policy draws on international, national and local guidance and correlates with the Digital Skills Passport (Individualised skills progression P1-P7) that the learners use to track their learning ad identify next steps is extremely successful. Currently, the Digital Skills Passports are in paper format however the school have the vision to move these to a digital format on Glow.
8	The digital learning and teaching strategy supports the inclusion of learners with additional support needs and provides guidance on the use of assistive and other technologies for their support particularly when they are working online.	Staff in the school have been working with pupils using Clicker 7, Nessy and Immersive Reader. The School is being very proactive in its use of assistive technologies to both support and challenge learners. I would suggest since every learner has an iPad that training on accessibility tools for text reader would be extremely useful. Disappointingly, I'm told some of the amazing assistive technology on the iPad is e.g. text-to-speech functionality is blocked by the region for safeguarding reasons.
9	Develops teachers', parents'/carers' and learners' understanding of the importance of internet safety and cyber resilience and how they can remain safe online.	The school has increased its internet safety provision to develop it further within the progression pathways which are currently being developed. There are clear links, support and help offered via the website and Twitter for supporting parents with internet safety. The schools have an explicit e-safety document ensuring it is planned, monitored and evaluated consistently and comprehensively.
10	Provides guidance on the management of digital technologies so that learners have regular access in a safe environment in school and at home.	The Acceptable Use policy has very detailed instructions on how digital technologies should be managed and used responsibly.
11	Outlines how to make best use of the internet as a resource for learning and teaching in a safe and responsible manner.	There is reference to the effective use of the internet in various documentation, including the monitoring of progress in this area in the position statements for each level. The School fully embraces the use of Glow as a safe cloud-based collaborative communication space and repository. Learners work with groups of younger children to support and lead the learning.

12	Includes an Acceptable Use Policy for working in school and at home. It is implemented throughout the school and shared with parents.	The school have tablet agreement document outline policy and procedures and there is a child-friendly version for learners which is up-to-date and comprehensive. This is shared with parents annually.

Use of Digital Technology to Deliver the Curriculum *100%*

The school have worked towards the targets of their school improvement plan to develop policy, map learning pathways and introduce Teams to all stages; lockdown expedited all of this. Staff, parents and learners have all made good progress with this and I think staff and pupils feel more confident. From discussions, it is clear there is a strong staff team who have come a considerable way in the digital learning journey and together they have the drive to ensure they are providing a curriculum that will prepare their children for 21st-century living. Dallas Primary School wants the best for their pupils, and I feel sure they will continue to develop and deepen their understanding of the use of technology to ensure all pupils are digitally competent, which includes them being innovative, creative, having an awareness of netiquette, digital safety, and exposure to appropriate applications.

#	Descriptor	Validator's comment
1	Digital technologies are a central consideration in all areas of the curriculum and its assessment, at all levels.	Due to the limitations of the validation visit being remote, I did not have had the opportunity to experience digital technology in action or view staff planners to see digital literacy embedded. However, staff are encouraged to include digital learning within their forward plans and provide contextualisation which proved crucial in response to lockdown and developing blended learning approaches. The use of Digital Skills Passports is a whole-school programme linked to the CfE technologies curriculum to ensure progression and clarity.
2	Digital technologies are used to enhance and extend learning experiences and to foster independent learning within and beyond the school.	As there are only thirty-four learners in the schools, which encourages a real community of practice; they all help develop team-teaching and encourage autonomy using digital tools through experiences. Due to the limitations of the validation visit being remote, I did not have had the opportunity to experience the learners in action however I spoke with some learners, Eva and Isla and heard about a lot of the exciting projects that have been involved in. The learners also made a great school tour video for me since I couldn't get into classes.
3	Digital technologies have a demonstrable impact on learning. Learners and teachers can articulate how learning has been enhanced.	During our remote session, I learned of many ways in which digital technology had been used to enhance and extend learning experiences. Digital technologies were fully embedded across the curriculum.

4	Digital technologies are used creatively by learners and teachers to engage with learning, teaching and assessment in school- based and blended learning contexts.	During the remote session, I discussed many of the ways that staff are engaging with learning, teaching and assessment in a blended way. There is a strong focus on knowledge construction and children leading the learning. Technologies such as Scratch and programmable toys are being used effectively to facilitate content creation. Learners email their parents every Friday with updates to how they got on that week and identifying their next steps. The schools are starting to moving away from paper-based 'learning journeys' to a digital recording format to allow the use of collaboration and multi-media.
5	Teachers integrate digital technologies into teaching and learning and provide learning experiences that support the transfer of digital skills across the curriculum	During the remote session, I discussed numerous examples of technology being implemented in classroom practice to facilitate effective cross-curricular learning. Some examples were the use of Glow, Teams, Education City, Sumdog, Nessy, Scratch to enhance learning across the curriculum. Digital technology is planned for and there is a good balance of discrete teaching of skills and incidental teaching as children apply skills across the curriculum. New progressive pathways through the use of a 'Digital skills Passport' are a work in progress. These will be reviewed and refined over time and ideally moved to a digital format.
6	Assistive Technologies and appropriate software/apps are deployed across all age groups to provide additional and/or differentiated learning for students with additional support needs.	The staff ensure assistive technologies are utilised (where applicable) across all stages, to support learners and facilitate more effective and meaningful differentiation. Training is cascaded to staff and learners to ensure the use of tools such as accessibility tools, Natural Reader, Clicker can assist learners. The use of book creator for orally capturing learning has proved successful. I have suggested contacted CALL Scotland for further information.

School Culture *97%*

This is a school where everyone is working cohesively to ensure the children are experiencing a quality digital technologies curriculum. There is a strong culture of collaboration and autonomy for self-directed learning. The headteacher is feeding into everything whilst drawing on self-directed and external training to do this. This model is moving the school forward at a good pace.

#	Descriptor	Validator's comment
1	There is evidence of a strong digital technology presence throughout the school.	With seven years using 1:1 iPads, I feel the school have come a long way in their digital journey and they have formed a very strong staff team who recognise the educational benefits digital technology brings to teaching and learning and want to prepare their pupils to be able to function in the ever-changing digital world of the future. The use of digital technology to support and enhance learning across the school is very strong. There was evidence of a variety of digital technologies being used very effectively. I felt the children had a sound understanding of the tools they were using and knew how they could apply these in different ways.

2	Teachers and learners demonstrate the motivational capacity of digital technologies	Through remote discussions, video, and resources e.g.Teams channels, it was clear that the use of digital technology motivated children and engaged more children in learning. Learning is enhanced by a range of digital experiences which have been embraced by all and the children have become leaders in the promotion of this culture. There is a strong culture throughout the staff team in the use and application of digital technologies and this has been strategically and purposefully cultivated.
3	The school has a website/blog or twitter account that is updated regularly and features learning and achievements.	The school website is very informative and has some excellent links for parents. Pupils share their learning on school and glow portfolios, which I was unable to access due to security measures. There is also a Facebook and Twitter page which shares important updates and messages and promotes and celebrates the work of the school.
4	The school has positive transition links to ensure there is progression of digital skills for learners.	The School are already involved in local clusters and sharing knowledge. They are actively working to improve transition links, in particular between the School and associated Secondary. The school has a strong culture of peer mentoring and training and there were several illustrations of learners helping and training each other.
5	Teachers use digital technologies in their own planning and administration.	Staff make effective use of digital technology for their own planning and administration which they felt streamlined their workflow. Office 365 productivity tools through Glow was central to this and staff had been trained in there use and were harnessing the capabilities of shared documents, accessing files anywhere, anytime from the One Drive. Staff were making good use of Teams to communicate and ensure everyone was included in information distribution and had access to the most up to date documents. Planning documents, individual pupil plans were online and could easily be pulled up, discussed, amended as required and saved or distributed to the appropriate people. The school are in the process of moving tracking and monitoring information online.
6	The school recognises and celebrates learners' use of digital technologies for their own learning.	The positive ethos and values of the School extend fully to celebrating the successes of their pupils in the use of digital technologies e.g sharing their progress through digital platforms e.g. Facebook and Twitter to recognise and showcase learners' use of technology.
7	The school uses digital technology to collaborate with other schools or organisations in local, national or international project work.	The headteacher has collaborated and trained with local cluster schools, teaches within the LA and with a school in Aberdeen. This project was entitled 'Danny the Champion of the World' and involved a local filmmaker which helped engage and motivate learners and staff in both schools. The headteacher, Mrs Grant is keen to continue collaborating and learning from others.

Professional Development *100%*

As with the curriculum, and as with teaching and learning day-to-day, the digital technologies are very clearly embedded in much of the school's approach to professional development. The school makes quite exceptional

use of a broad range of applications and resources with respect to professional development both in and about digital technology. There is a needs-based programme of professional learning available for all staff and teachers are encouraged to explore on-line or external learning. staff and learners work collaboratively which was also driving teachers' digital skills forward.

#	Descriptor	Validator's comment
1	The digital learning and teaching strategy facilitates professional development in, about and through school-based and online digital technologies.	Staff are in the enviable position of having learners with their own devices for seven years now. Training is very much on a needs-basis and in line with any new tools, strategies being developed e.g. writing is a priority just now and the use of Book Creator for helping develop writing has had a significant impact. Training is available through the Local Authority, in-house and one-to-one peer support. Teachers have engaged in CLPL to meet the school's current priorities of using the Promethean boards effectively and implementing Microsoft Teams. Training included but was not limited to, coding using Scratch, Hour of Code, Barefoot activities, iMovie, Office 365 productivity tools, Collaboration tools using Teams and One Note, Immersive reader, Clicker 7, animation, book creator, digital profiling, digital progression through CfE and digital citizenship and safety.
2	The majority of staff have engaged in school-based and other CLPL programmes that are focused on enhancing learning and teaching through the use of digital technologies for in-school and blended learning situations.	Regular skills audits and self-evaluation are undertaken to help shape and plan the CLPL accordingly. Staff discuss strengths and plan next steps during annual PRD meetings. Staff are encouraged to take ownership of their learning and to share their expertise with others.
3	Teachers are encouraged to be innovative and self-directed learners by exploring new strategies for class-based and blended learning pedagogies.	There is a recognition that teachers are at different stages in their digital skills journey and they all help and support each other. Staff are given areas to focus on and lead to ensure sustainability and distributed leadership and are self-directed and are exploring ways of integrating digital learning even further.
4	The school utilises the expertise in digital technologies acquired among staff and collaborates with other schools and organisations to inform practice.	There is a strong collegiate culture in school and staff support each other. Staff share their knowledge and experience with local cluster schools and teachers in the LA.
5	There is an ethos of self and collaborative review, supported by systematic review processes that focus on improvement in teacher pedagogical competence in school-based and online teaching and learning formats.	Regular audits of skills and competences are carried out and progress monitored over time. CLPL is tailored to the needs of all staff, with training and support as required.
6	Teachers are confident in the safe, secure and appropriate integration of digital technologies in their daily teaching. Learning and teaching is in line with the Internet Safety and Cyber Resilience curriculum.	The school has a progression digital safety document which offers links and suggestion and helps scaffold training and pupil learning. Teachers choose their own lesson resources e.g.ThinkUKnow. The school is alert to digital safety and communicates were applicable through Facebook, Twitter.

#	Descriptor	Validator's comment
7	The school keeps abreast of developments in technological, professional practice and the curriculum in relation to digital technologies Staff are aware of their professional development needs in relation to digital learning and teaching	The school's headteacher has played a pro-active role in ensuring that staff are kept up-to-date with the ever-changing face of technology. She keeps abreast of professional practice by attending external training, reading relevant documents and she shares this with staff within the school.

Resources and Infrastructure *100%*

Staff recognise the educational value of digital resources and exploit these effectively. They make good use of the resources available and where opportunities are sought to keep up-to-date with digital technologies to support learning. The school is well resourced ensuring digital resources can be more embedded in teaching and learning.

#	Descriptor	Validator's comment
1	There is widespread access to computers, laptops and/or tablet devices and other physical devices where appropriate in school and outside.	Children use a variety of technology on a daily basis to support and enhance learning. Teachers recognise the educational value of digital technology and exploit these effectively. The school currently have eighteen PC's and every learner has an iPad (with staff donating their LA iPads and buying their own to ensure every learner has one). Every teacher has their own iPad for class activities, assessment, etc. every learning space has a Promethean board with the capability to link to iPads to share knowledge, skills and learning. The school has a range of hands-on resources e.g. BB8 Spheros, Ollie, Makey-makey.
2	The school deploys digital resources in the most appropriate manner to maximise opportunities for effective learning in school and at home.	The organisation of technology across the school was fairly straight forward and effective as it is a small establishment.
3	Online environments, including Glow are used responsibly to support a wide range of learning activities within and beyond the school and GDPR issues have been considered.	Glow is being used in school and at home. Microsoft Teams, which sits within the Office 365 set of productivity tools, is being used in classes to set homework and as a communication stream with children. All learners from P1 have a Glow email account. Pupils were aware of being able to log into Glow at home and to continue working on a file stored in their One Drive. Children were able to use email through Glow and were making use of Teams for collaborative work. They were able to select ways in which to create new content or evidence their learning from a range of tools. Pupils were able to select the most appropriate tool to create new content or to evidence their learning in their preferred way. Pupils were encouraged to add evidence and impact of learning into their profile on Glow to track their learning and to share with parents at home.

4	The local authority network is used effectively to create, record, store and share resources and learners' work.	Learners and staff are using Glow to store files in their One Drive and shared files in Teams and this is to be encouraged as they can be accessed from home and enable seamless learning. The school are beginning to make use of the storage within Glow which makes accessibility of work easier to manage from different locations. They have devised processes for uploading work from iPads etc. to free up space on the device and to store this an organised and easily accessible way. Learners are taught to save their latest and best work to their Glow portfolio.
5	The school has sufficient internet/wifi access throughout.	Internet access is available across the school and readily accessible, albeit the school is remote and access can be intermittent.
6	The school's software/apps cover a wide range of curricular areas and learning needs.	The School utilises a broad range of software and digital applications to provide a rich and diverse, cross-curricular learning experience for its pupils. There is a good range of software in use across the school, including some to support learners with ASN. The school has enhanced provision and has built up expertise in the use of assistive technologies. Staff were very familiar with the needs of all learners and could tailor the range of adaptive settings within the devices to individual needs.
7	Teachers frequently use age and ability-appropriate software/apps to support differentiated and targeted learning.	Teachers across the school make effective use of a range of age and stage appropriate software to meet the needs of all learners across curricular areas. They use this is a variety of differentiated ways.
8	The school is fully compliant with all software/app licencing requirements and are GDPR compliant	The school is fully compliant.

General Recommendations:

It was a pleasure to speak with Mrs Mairi Grant, the headteacher who was keen to tell me about Dallas Primary's digital learning journey. Although it was a remote visit her infectious enthusiasm and pride at the whole school's accomplishments were clearly evident. There is a sense of a strong staff team who work collaboratively together. Having implemented a 1:1 iPad programme seven years ago, Dallas Primary recognise they are on a journey. It is my recommendation that Dallas Primary has achieved the Digital Schools Award (Scotland). I also recommend they are asked to become a mentor school as they have the capacity to share and develop their skills with others.

Signed

Joanna S. Maclean

Joanna Maclean
External validator